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THE SMITH-HUGHES LAW AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

By T. E. BROWNE

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The Smith-Hughes Act, which was signed by the President of the United States, February 23, 1917, gives the farm-life schools, the rural high schools, and the city schools of the state the greatest opportunity to more fully serve the vocational needs of their constituents than any one event in the history of the country. This law provides for Federal aid to the states for the promotion of vocational education in agriculture, the trades and industries, and home economics, under special conditions. All this fund must be administered through state controlled schools and each dollar of Federal funds must be matched by a dollar of state or local money.

In order to safeguard the spending of this money, the law provides for the appointing of a State Board for vocational education, which Board may be the State Board of Education or a Special Board appointed for this specific purpose. The Legislature of North Carolina appointed a Special Board composed of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the President of the State College of Agriculture and Engineering, and the Director of Co-operative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics. This Board is charged with the responsibility of administering the Federal funds accruing to the State, and is the body through which the Federal Board conducts all its dealings with the State.

The sentiment in favor of Federal aid for vocational education, which culminated in the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act, has been rapidly gaining favor during the last ten years. The National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education is largely responsible for the rapid growth of sentiment during recent years. The world has recognized the need of a training which our traditional courses of study failed to give. The inefficiency of our labor is evidence of this fact. Our high schools were giving little training which had a special value toward fitting the student for his life work. Men and women went into the trades and industries without any knowledge of the fundamental principles upon which the trade or industry was based. They were compelled to go through the apprenticeship period, which too often made mere machines. The Smith-Hughes law appropriates money to the states for the specific purpose of promoting vocational intelligence, and under its provisions, the rural high school should reach its fullest development and greatest usefulness by ministering to the

civic, intellectual and vocational needs of all the people in its environment, making its course of study as broad as the needs of civilized society.

DEPARTMENT MEETINGS AT THE TEACHERS ASSEMBLY

ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS

The Association of County Superintendents had a very successful meeting in Charlotte. Practically all of the superintendents of the State were present. Four sessions were held, and interesting topics were discussed at each session. The first meeting was with the high school principals. In the discussion of the place of the high schools in the county system by Mr. Walker, he quoted the recent Supreme Court decision, and made it clear once and for all, that the high school has come into its own as an integral part of the county school system.

Members of the State Department discussed in the various meetings the plans of the State Department with particular reference to work among adult illiterates, community service, medical inspection and the work of the State Board of Examiners and Institute Conductors. More time was given to the latter than to any other department. The discussion showed that the superintendents are genuinely interested in the work of this board, and intend to give it their sympathetic co-operation.

Other outstanding features were the delightful discussion of Superintendent P. W. Horn, of Houston, Texas, on the relation of boards to superintendents and to teachers, and the joint meeting of the superintendents and board members.

As a means of stimulating more active interest in these meetings on the part of the superintendents themselves, State Superintendent Joyner requested them to form an organization of their own and take charge of the making of the program for next year's meeting. The association honored Superintendent Joyner by electing him as president and filled the other office from the ranks of the county superintendents.—S. B. UNDERWOOD.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

This department held only one session, Friday morning at 9 o'clock, at the Y. M. C. A. building. The president, Professor J. Henry Highsmith, made a short address, "Some Thoughts on the New College Education." Dr. Charles A. McMurtry, of George Peabody College, made an excellent address, discussing the relationship between elementary and higher